

# COINQUEST, being a

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... Publication for Collectors of: Countermarked, Cut and Holed Coins, Tokens and Medals; Siege and Necessity Pieces; Love Tokens; and, Numismatic Literature.

JANUARY, 1976 VOLUME I, NUMBER 3

## *Two of Our "Giants" Are Missing*

### IN MEMORIAM

Death has claimed two "giants" of numismatics, Maurice M. Gould, Tustin, California, and Kurt Jaeger, Korntal, Germany.

It was my pleasure and benefit to know both men; Maury I knew only by mail for ten years, and Kurt, personally, for eight years.

Maury was a human being, and subject to human failings, I know, but I never saw that side of the man ... he was always willing, nay, eager, to help me in any manner, particularly in the countermark field; without his cheerful, consistent urging, Coinquest would not be in your hands now.

His advice and criticism, and his columns, were freely given ... he gave of himself without once asking anything in return. Can anyone offer more? I don't believe so.

I met Kurt Jaeger while living in Germany in 1967 - 1969; it was my privilege to invite him to serve as a guest speaker and exhibit judge at the Mannheim-Heidelberg Coin Club's annual show in May, 1968.

Contrary to American opinion prevailing at the time, Kurt was pleasantly sociable, very knowledgeable in world coins, and spoke very good English. He spent three days at that show lecturing, judging and answering questions ... he, too, gave more than he asked.

Most of us will pass through life hardly noticed, leaving, if anything, a small countermark on man's history, but Maury and Kurt left two giant holes in the humanitarian and numismatic scenes.

At the thought of their passings, I've shed tears because they were my friends ... but, were those tears really for them, or for the knowledge of my (our) losses?

For whatever unfathomable reasons, I'll miss them.  
And they'll be missed by thousands of friends, collectors and readers.  
Farewell, Maury ... Goodbye, Kurt.  
Two giants.

CG

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# COLLECTORS' CIRCULAR



# Problems of Greek Letter Countermarks

By  
Frederick G. Ruben  
Chesapeake, Va.

It has been suggested by several authors that many of the counter-stamped Greek letters (which also represent numbers) on bronze coins of Imperial Asia Minor represent revaluations. The problem of which marks are value and which have some other unknown significance awaits the data, yet a few suggestions are possible.

The marks recorded by this writer represent the numbers 3 through 12 (Γ through ΙΒ), with the significant absence of 7, 9, and 11 (Ζ, Θ, and ΙΑ). They are present on coins whose initial value is questionable, yet these coins appear to follow Roman Imperial both in style and size. The relative absence of native silver issues with Greek denominations outside Cappadocia and Syria makes the revaluation theory probable, and is increased because revaluation marks have yet to be found from these issuing areas.

It will be presumed that the coins were representations of various increments of the Roman as, and that they were raised to higher values. Based on an Augustian denarius of 16 as, and that most of the pieces resemble one as pieces and sesterii (4 as), logical raises are to easy divisions of 16. This is not the case since 3, 5 and 10 (Γ, Ε and Ι) are known. One must therefore either discount these marks or conclude that regular divisions are not necessary.

These marks are found on pieces of great geographical distribution within Asia Minor, yet without knowing a location of discovery it is not possible to state anything aside from the city of the coin's issue.

Weight and size comparisons have so far yielded no clear indication of a system, and it is possible that they never will, due in part to the distance between areas. Normally each city produced coins in a limited number of sizes, thus what might be available for revaluation was limited in scope.

One of the most convincing arguments for revaluation rests on the lack of alternates in interpreting the Greek numeral s. Other numbers are also letters, yet this is only used to represent six. Likewise, ΙΒ would be

difficult to conceive of as anything but its numeral equivalent, 12.

Finding a date for the addition of these counterstamps is a problem itself. They are found on coins dateable 70 to 270 A.D., and surely could have been added after then. Quite probably there was reason to revalue at more than one period, but most of those marked are after 200 A.D. Relative wear seems to indicate a later date.

It would be expected that with rampant inflation and total debasement of the coinage occurring during the rule of Gallienus (253-268 A.D.), some adjustment had to be made to the circulating minor coins. The "silver" was merely washed bronze, supposedly worth 32 of the bronze as. The bronze itself became rarely struck, so that circulating pieces had to be adjusted or be worth more as scrap. Counterstamps could almost be expected.

Most of the probable revaluation marks are crude, which brings up the problem of official sanction or private necessity. This problem will never be answered, yet these marks are found opposite marks showing artistic merit, and are in direct contrast to these.

There are many questions still unanswered, but with further re-

search it should be proved or disproved what is here presented. It becomes a question of what is expected and what is found.

Prior to publication of this article, support and contradiction has already been presented to this author. The possibility has been raised that marks of Ε and Ι (5 and 10) were added not as units of the Roman as but as multiples of the Byzantine numus. This is a possibility that might apply to the most worn issues, yet this author believes should be generally discounted.

Byzantine coins of 5 numia were first produced in the mid 5th Century AD, a full 200 years after the last imperial issues of Asia Minor. The first Byzantine 5 numia pieces were a mere 12mm, while 10 numia did not exceed 20mm. This author has found the marks on coins rarely under 25mm, and has come to the conclusion that bronze of these times circulated rapidly and wore rapidly. It is doubted that many could survive into the 5th century.

This counter argument does not lend any support to the initial premise that the majority of these marks are revaluations of multiples of the as, and were revalued on a local rather than regional basis.

## A Letter On Grading

I'm afraid I'd be hard put to come up with specific "criteria" for grading a countermarked coin. In form, I do it this way in my own lists: Grade of coin/Grade of c/s, such as "VG/F-VF" meaning a VG coin with c/s somewhere between F and VF. Grading the c/s itself, I think it most useful to base judgement on both quality of strike and wear.

As for "anchoring" these judgements on specific criteria for each of the grading terms, I don't think it can be done any more than it can be done for coins themselves, except on a series - by - series basis.

For example, I know of comprehensive published grading guides for US, Canadian, British, Philippine, and most Mexican series. However, beyond this it's just a matter of taking a look at the coin (or c/s) and making

a judgement against either: a) A concept of what the piece should ideally look like (objective grading), or b) a concept or knowledge of what the piece looks like when issued ("for-the-series" grading.)

Inasmuch as I deal largely with crude, hand-struck native African and Asian coinages, which are comparable in their mode of manufacture to most c/s, I prefer to use for-the-series grading.

However, this creates problems with customers trying out unfamiliar series (e.g. going from British Indian to native states!) so in practice I use objective grading based on strike and wear. And this is what I would recommend for grading c/s.

Scott Semans  
Cleveland, Ohio



# Countermark Vs. Counterstamp

By  
Major Fred Pridmore  
Taunton, Somerset, England

(Continued from Last Issue)

Basically, it may be said there are two main groups of countermarks and like the normal minted pieces of metal used in any monetary sense, they are either "official" or unofficial, although when dealing with a countermarked coin, this is over simplification.

Ordinarily, one would class as "official" all marks that had the sanction of a ruling government possessing sovereign powers and suitably announced to the public by decree. But then it is necessary to determine the status of the "official" body and its powers.

We have elected governments with sovereign powers and self-elected ones too: Revolutionary governments whose area of control was limited to the territory held by force of arms; governors of provinces, colonies, states or towns, who assumed extraordinary powers during times of neglect, disaster, war, famine or revolt, and sometimes even still lesser bodies such as local communities and town councils, some of which were elected, some appointed and even others who purported to act in accordance with powers conferred upon their corporate body. In all these cases, on adjustment to the money supply by means of a countermark was invariably announced to the public by some decree, order or notice.

Some of the classifications within the "official" group are:

1) **Revaluation.** To alter the value of an existing coin; this is a very common purpose and used by many states or countries.

2) **Change of Status.** Another common reason. The coins of foreign countries, provided with a new locale.

3) **Verification of genuineness...** Found on gold, silver and copper coins.

4) **Restriction of circulation and prevention of export.**

5) **Change of reign or government.**

6) **To distinguish forgeries.** Forged coins stamped as such and returned to their owners e.g. the word BAD on USA forged dollars.

7) **Coins used as planchets** in a mint to test official dies or punches. Pieces of this category are somewhat rare.

Unofficial:

The vast majority of countermarks encountered by the average collector will fall into this group and the purpose for the application of the countermark covers a still wider range.

In addition to those already noted under the "official" group we can add.

8) **Token money.** Lawful coins and tokens either domestic or foreign, stamped to create a token currency peculiar to a named issuer, firm or locality.

9) **Identification.** Tokens of identical design, stamped to distinguish their several issuers; also adopted by bankers.

10) **Up-dating.** To record a change in the name of the original issuer. (on private tokens.)

## A Possible Attribution

The first coin pictured in CQ#2 is believed to be Marcus Aurelius (161-180AD) from Tarsus, Cilicia. This guess is based on a similar size piece of Tarsus of Geta (198-212AD) that has the same identical two marks on both pieces the marks should be dated to the early third century AD. While the upper mark appears to be a cult image, the lower is definitely an eagle in the Roman Imperial style. Although the eagle is a common symbol on Roman provincial coinages, one might be tempted to associate a mark added during this period to troupe activities of Severus Alexander in 232AD, the last extensive military activity in the area for approx. fifty years.

More examples are first needed to establish a closer date.

F. G. Ruben

Several months ago a card was received that read:

"A group / of your neighbors / wish to announce / that the / 'one way' frosty glass / in your bathroom / is facing / the wrong way."

No particular reason for the card, but it was a revelation.

11) **Advertisement.** A common reason and used by individuals, commercial firms or organizations, to advertise their goods or services.

12.) **Political.** Propaganda; still a common form of countermark. For example:

Vote the Land Free (USA)

Swastika (South Africa)

U.D.F. or V.D.F. (Northern Ireland)

13) **Work tickets and checks** obtained by countermarking legal tender coins or tokens.

14) **Military Identity Discs.** Fairly common during World War I in the British and Commonwealth Forces.

In all the above classes, more than one piece occurs with the countermark. Although in the military identity disc series, the name of the individual is unique but not the style of the punch marks.

15) **Vandals.** Under this general heading I would place the so-called Love tokens, lucky pocket pieces and similar related items. In my opinion they rate the lowest degree of interest.

So, **Countermarked or Counterstamped**, you have a wide and varied field in which to satisfy almost every aspect of collecting coins legitimate and illegitimate but some lack artistic merit.

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# Counterstamps On U.S. Large Cents

By

Warren A. Lapp, M.D.  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

(Continued from Last Issue)

## III. FOR PERSONAL REASONS:

A. A number of large cents were counterstamped with individual names, for personal reasons — much like the Short-Snorter dollar bill of World War II, or like putting a note bearing one's name and address into a bottle and then tossing it into a river or the ocean.

According to F. G. Duffield, many of the large cents counterstamped with names can be traced back to Ben Parker of Bangor, Maine. Parker operated a brass foundry and did metal working, such as making brass knuckles and ornaments for harnesses. It was Parker's custom to counterstamp his name on cents and pass them out to his customers.

Likewise, on request, he would stamp other names or initials onto the cents for his customers and friends. J. W. Strange, a brass founder, die sipker, and stencil maker also from Bangor, carried on a similar custom for his patrons and friends. Strange's countermarks were more artistic and usually done in small script letters.

Some of the coins counterstamped with names may actually be store cards.

The cents bearing the countermark "Dr. G. G. Wilkins," stamped in a semi-circle, are very common. This countermark has been found on copper-nickel cents, Flying Eagle cents, a three cent silver piece, and an 1833 half dollar. Dr. Wilkins was a prominent Philadelphia physician.

B. Initials also appear frequently as countermarks. Gould suggested that the custom of putting one's initials on a large cent might stem from the old proverb: "A bad penny always turns up."

Duffield listed a 1793 cent with the countermark "G. W." (for George Washington?) However, he noted that the countermark "G. W." also has been found on other denominations and suggests that the initials were for some particular purpose rather than a mere mutilation of the coins.

A number of large cents have been counterstamped or scratched with just an "X" for reasons unknown.

## IV. FOR TESTING OF NEW DIES:

These counterstamps were usually applied by jewelers, silversmiths, gun makers, and die punchers to determine the quality and nature of the die.

One counterstamped large cent of great rarity and much sought after bears the bust of Washington facing left on one side of the coin and the bust of Lafayette facing right and "1824" on the opposite side. Duffield offered two possible explanations for the over-striking of this coin: (1) When Lafayette and his party visited the U. S. Mint in 1824, they were each invited to proffer a coin, which was then counterstamped for them from punches especially prepared for the occasion, or (2) the cents were prepared in advance by the Mint so that they could be tossed from the carriages into the crowds lining the streets as Lafayette and his party passed through in procession. Such a specimen in Fine was offered in the New Netherlands' 59th sale.

Also listed for that sale was an 1848 cent bearing a bust of Franklin in a fur cap, facing left, the design being overstruck on the obverse. The cataloger noted that the die for Franklin dated from the Civil War period but the overstrike was probably done about 1930-1935.

## "Far Out" Grades

Read in a recent sale catalog: "Scarce Select Strike Proof-Like BU;" Also, "BU Gem Proof-Like;" "Rare Gem Proof," and, "Lovely Gem Proof." Question: Other than money, what the hell's the cataloger talking about?

The more adjectives and descriptions, the MORE the price, regardless of the quality, mintage or demand. Wonder whatever happened to the old-fashioned terms, "Unc.," "BU," and just plain "Proof?"

Seems to me that a "Proof" is born that way ... gem, choice, select, or whatever. Now, if it has a big fat thumb print on a surface, or a rim nick, then it's (or used to be,) an "Impaired proof with rim nick," etc.

IF, today, I bought a coin listed plainly as "Proof," what would I get?

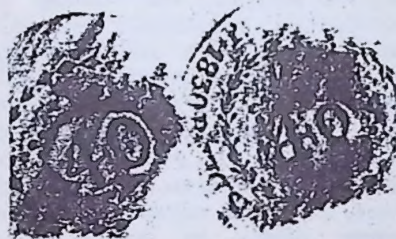
Bet I wouldn't get kissed in the process.

In summary, let it be said that countermarked large cents are a specialty and a variety until themselves. Many of them are fascinating examples, and those who do not already collect them should consider whether or not they might want to add a few to their collections.

It is gratifying that Carling Gresham has seen fit to publish *Coinquest* in search of further information about counterstamped coins and the people attributed to them by names, initials, or other marks. By pooling all the information available and by stimulating additional research on the pieces, maybe we will all benefit in the long run. It will be an interesting experiment at any rate.

## Brazilian Variety

(From Gregory Brunk, via Harry Bottenfield, the following information on Brazilian countermarks is submitted. I have 36 such cmks in my collection, but I don't have the variety mentioned, therefore, it probably is scarce, or even rare. — Ed)



Brazilian cmks appear to be quite common, especially those revaluation cmks from 80 to 40 reis, 40 to 20 reis and 20 to 10 reis.

Some of these were cmkd in 1835 by the government of Para (Leitao 178, No. 774,) which are very crude and the crossbar of the "4" has a crosslet at its end. The number is notably thinner and there are no lines in the background (field.)

Readers with "40" cmks in their collections are asked to notify Bottenfield, whose address is 7361 N. Hoyne, Chicago, IL 60645, as to the number of common "40" cmks they have, and also the number of crosslet varieties they own.

Negative reports are valuable in the "Big Picture," therefore, they should be submitted.



Continued ...

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By  
Gregory G. Brunk  
Waterloo, Iowa

(Continued from Last Issue)

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(Continued on Next Page)

## Obock (Re)Discovered!

With regard to the Obock countermark shown on page 3 of the November issue of COINQUEST, we are inclined to agree that this is probably yet another of the recently concocted spurious countermarks with an Arabic flavor, but the city of Obock itself is very real.

Obock, in East Africa on the Gulf of Tadjoura, became a French Colony in 1862 but was not actively colonized until 1884. According to Mazard, on November 21, 1885, the Maria Theresa Taler and the British Indian Rupee were given legal tender status at 4.20 Francs and 2.00 Francs, respectively.

A series of late 19th century French Colonial postage stamps exists for Obock. In 1888 the capital was moved to Djibouti, and shortly thereafter the name of the colony was changed to French Somaliland. In 1967 the name was changed again to Afars and Issas.

Thus, the city is real, and the Indian Rupee had legal tender status there, but it does seem to us highly unlikely that the French authorities would apply a countermark entirely in Arabic and equally unlikely, even on

the off chance that the mark is contemporary, that it has any official status whatsoever.

On another point: We have been engaged for some time upon a complete restudy of the ubiquitous Central American Sun and Mountains countermark. While no final conclusions have yet been reached, preliminary study does indicate that the countermarks were applied a full decade earlier than previous catalogs have indicated, and that at least 7 genuine dies, 2 false contemporary dies, and 3 forged modern dies exist for the series.

To further this research we would like to hear from COINQUEST readers having such pieces in their collections. We are particularly interested in knowing exactly what coins the cmks appear on, and information should include: whether the countermark appears singly or in conjunction with others, whether the coin itself is of good weight, and the date, mint, and denomination of the under coin.

William B. Christensen  
Madison, N. J.



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(Beginning with Afghanistan but temporarily excluding Germany).

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Richard Crosby  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

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(Continued Next Issue)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**WANTED:** Collector wishes to purchase the following c/s: "Devins & Bolton, Montreal," "Use G.G.G.," "N. J. Tracy," "Pears' Soap." Describe and price. John C. Allred, 1401 W. Whittier Blvd., Montebello, Ca. 90640.

**WANTED:** Canadian counterstamps on anything, or any counterstamps on Canadian tokens. Describe and price. J. E. Everingham, 204 N. Hills Dr., Parkersburg, W. Va. 26101.

**WEST INDIAN COUNTERSTAMPS AND TOKENS.** Will buy or trade. Let me know what you have. ANA, ANS, OIN, AVA, TAMS. Edward Roehrs, Arecibo, P.R. 00612.

**WANTED:** Photographs of coins of Napoleon Bonaparte with "cat" or screech owl counterstamps, for photo archives and study. Richard Dickerson, Dept. of Chemistry, Cal Tech, Pasadena, CA 91125.

**SPECIALIZING** in U.S. half dimes, dimes and half dollars, 1807-37. Would like to hear or any countermarks on coins that area. ANA, ANS, BHNC, JRCS. David J. Davis, P. O. Box 205, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.



## We Get Letters

Letters from readers are requested for this column — Share your experiences and ideas with others. Unsigned letters will not be accepted, but names will be withheld on request.

We have now received the first two issues of COINQUEST and we have been much impressed with the high quality of this publication. Countermarked coins have not received the attention which they deserve, and it will be a great step forward if all the scattered information on the subject can be gathered together.

We were pleased to learn that you are initiating a program to compile lists of countermarks for eventual publication in a general world catalogue.

As our collection of countermarked Canadian coins and tokens is probably the largest in existence we will be pleased to co-ordinate the Canadian section of this project. This work will be handled by Mr. Hillel Kaslove, one of our Deputy Curators.

We also have in our collection quite a number of foreign countermarks and we will be pleased to forward information concerning these as well.

S. Carroll, Chief Curator  
National Currency Collection  
Bank of Canada

\*\*\*\*

I'm pleased to see that you're publishing COINQUEST. There has never been enough information available on countermarked coins; perhaps through your publication many pieces will be identified.

I'll be sending you a list of the Canadian countermarks, as well as the foreign countermarks, contained in our collection.

H. Kaslove  
Deputy Curator  
National Currency Collection  
Bank of Canada

\*\*\*\*

*With an offer such as that, I want to stand up and cheer. Countermark collectors, and numismatists in general, will benefit from your efforts and generosity.*

*My thanks to Major Carroll, Mr. Kaslove and their staffs, for collectors everywhere.*

Editor

\*\*\*\*

I find COINQUEST extremely interesting and informative. I'm one of the people who regarded countermarked coins, apart from the well-cataloged "official" countermarks, as defaced coins.

I now look at them in a different light and with a bit more interest.

D. Martis  
Motherwell, Lanarkshire,  
Scotland

We have read your Circular and it looks to be a very interesting undertaking. We're looking forward to the publication of Coinquest and wish you the best of luck with it.

John F. Jefferson  
Coins of the Realm  
Rockville, Md.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks for your kindness in the initial issue. When I have time to get to the boxes of unattributed cmks, will make a list and send it on to you.

All my best.

Ray Byrne  
Delray Beach, Fla.

\*\*\*\*\*

I note that one of our Scottish readers has dug into his purse and extracted some notes for a subscription to CQ. I hope others will do the same!

Best Wishes for the success of your publication.

Arthur Blair, Editor  
Coins and Medals  
London, England

\*\*\*\*

*Mr. Blair's hopes have been fulfilled already as we now have two ... yes, that's right ... two ... "cany Scots" who have contributed generously to CQ's coffers.*

*The Chancellor of the Exchange may be aghast at the knowledge that England's balance of payments deficit is being threatened so thoroughly by the sudden, violent outflow of her capital, to the township of Pomona Park, Florida. (U.S.A.)*

*At the risk of creating panic on the Exchange, I'll also reveal that we have another Scot virtually "in the bag." (Through an informer I've learned that he has opened his purse three times in the past two weeks!)*

*I do hope that Mr. Blair doesn't go to the wall for his efforts on our behalf ... seems like such a nice chap.*

*Fun aside, I must mention that Mr. Blair has been kind enough to "plug" CQ in two recent issues of Coins and Medals, resulting in two subscriptions and several inquiries.*

*Not only that, he puts together a very informative and attractive magazine, a copy of which should be in every collector's study.*

Editor

I respectfully disagree with your comments regarding lot no. 584. The Persian siglos (plural, sigloi) is a silver coin, not bronze. Actually, bronze coins were not used in the early part of the 5th Century B. C., the date proposed for this c/s in your World Coins article.

The illustration shows the head of a Roman Emperor of the 1st or 2nd Century A.D., and the "turtle" somewhat resembles the head of a goddess to me.

You might check Brunk's listing in The Numismatist and see if you recognize it.

Lots 585-587 probably are countermarks of the issuing states; 588 is attributable to the military campaigns of the Romans under Tiberius Caesar against the Germans, and 589 is attributable to the currency reform in the early part of the reign of Nero. (NCAPR: Nero Caesar Augustus Provabit)

Robert D. Leonard, Jr.  
Winnetka, Ill.

\*\*\*\*

*Thanks, Robert; I didn't know (all) that.*

*But, then, that's what Coinquest is all about ... sharing information and ideas with other collectors.*

*A quick dodge: The staff at the British Museum suggested, a number of years ago, that the piece was a siglos; they didn't, though, offer any clues to the countermarks. I worked on the premise that I was looking at an owl cmk.*

*Recently another correspondent claimed that my owl is really an eagle. (Lordy, if an eagle, he's certainly undernourished!)*

*Color me confused! We will, though, keep open all lines of communication in an attempt to solve the mystery(ies.)*

*Eagle or owl; siglos or sigloi ... all of this only proves my longstanding contention that countermark collectors have more fun in the widest field of numismatics, i.e., fewer facts, for less money, than ANY other area of collecting.*

Editor

\*\*\*\*

A follow up article to the page 6, November issue of CQ bibliography might be a list of individuals, stores or companies, etc., who sell copies of those countermark works.

James K. Allen  
Franklin, N.C.

\*\*\*\*\*

*How 'bout it, book dealers? Why not try a countermark book sale ad in Coinquest? Maybe a teeny-weeny classified?*

editor



## And More Letters ...

Anyone who has the guts to embark upon the most controversial of all numismatic areas, Carling, certainly merits at least one subscription ... for which my negotiable paper is enclosed!

There are a couple hundred USA trade dollars still floating around which were chopmarked in the railroad shops at Temple, Texas, 20 years ago.

There's a lad ... his name escapes me ... who has a shop on the square in Guatemala City who earns his frioles by countermarking various pieces, although his punch does vary in diameter from the genuine in some instances.

And I'm certain that we'll see Maria Theresia talers freshly cmkd since the Arab lands discontinued using that coin.

So, as I say, you'll have an interesting time publishing COINQUEST, Carling. But, all the luck in the world ... good luck, that is ... to you!

Virgil Hancock  
Bellaire, Texas

\*\*\*\*\*

*Thanks for the information and the compliments, Virgil, but your guts are showing, too, with your attempts to "overhaul" the ANA.*

*I, therefore, return a goodly portion of the good luck you wished on me, for I think you're going to need it more than I will.*

*Regardless, we're still in the greatest hobby there is.*

Editor

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm trying to build a reference library of Bank Histories and would be obliged if you have any such publications you can offer.

John A. B. Cormack  
Little Lever, Bolton  
Lancashire, England

\*\*\*\*

*Anyone able / willing to help Mr. Cormack, I'll be happy to forward mail to his address, or to send his address to them.*

Editor

\*\*\*\*\*

Looking forward to the next issue!

Mark Greengold  
Miami, Fla.

\*\*\*\*

The following letter is printed just as written, to assure M. Yann Poupinot that he is quite capable of communicating in English.

I'm the second to admit that there're many grammatical errors in the letter, but I found much pleasure, and knowledge, in reading it.

I like to think that CQ readers will feel the same as I did.

Editor

\*\*\*\*\*

Excuse my wrong english, learn at school before World War II, and practically never used since!

I was reading your paper in Coinquest November 1975 page 8. Would you note a mistake written by your correspondent about Civilian War against French Republic system, during Revolution in West part of France.

Of course, Royalists were most part from "Vendee" and her war's name was "Vendeens" and NEVER Chouans. The "Chouans" were, as correctly noted, troops commanded by Jean Chouan. But he lived in north side of river Loire. Just at the old boundary between Brittany and Maine. Chouans from North Loire areas were kind of partisans. Vendeens allway in South Loire had regular armies.

No very friends between those two formations, because Vendeens were French, fighting first for God True and the King, and Chouans from Brittany fight first for freedom. It is quite different. Today in Brittany we have a strong autonomist movement against Parisian policy. In Vendee absolutely nothing.

In number 3 French coin, I suggest you the following explanation. All royalist coins were used during first half XIX century under Republic, Empire, Restauration and so on. Some ancient coins minted under King Louis XV or XVI were countermarked with two flags blue-white-red colours from Republic. It is a kind of protestation from Republican anonymous people against old coins utilization during short time under Second French Revolution 1830 year who dethroned King Charles X.

In other part of your very interesting publication, I am surprised by commentaries about Obok, page 3. Would you note as Obok is a little town in north part of ancient French Somaliland, now French Territory of Assars and Ifas. She was chief town several years after French occupation with help of Ethiopian, but at the end of the XIXth century, supplanted by Djibouti, harbour located at the end of railway from Addis-Abeba.

Since VIIIth century trade traffic was first with West shore of India, across Oman Sea with typical sailing ships called "dhow" and "boutres". Also Indian coins were all the time used for change in that little part of African shore, with or without c/m Note also as Maria-Theresa Talers were minted also during WWII in India for Somalian and Rebels Ethiopian who were fighting against Italian and Axis forces.

Sincerely yours, hoping to hear from you, with my apologizes for bad writing, and I say also my best wishes for Christmass and Holy new Year.

Yann Poupinot  
Vantes, France

I enjoy COINQUEST and all of its news and information, and I appreciate the hard work you're doing to make it possible.

Have you ever seen a list of all of the World Trade Coins with Chinese chopmarks, that are available?

I know that World Coins published a good article (Oct., '64,) listing many nations and provinces, but I think there should be a comprehensive list to guide collectors of that type material.

I wonder if this could be a project for COIN-QUEST? Collectors could send lists detailing country of origin, denomination, dates, sizes of the chops, etc.

Also, maybe there should be a guide, a standard, that would indicate by numerical count if a coin was chopped "light", "medium," "heavy," or whatever.

More information that would prove interesting and helpful would be the number of chopmarked coins for sale that a collector (observer) could find within his area. I'm afraid there aren't too many chopped coins for sale any more.

W. H. Major  
Confluence, Pa.

\*\*\*\*

*And I'm afraid you just elected yourself chairman of the Select Committee on Chinese Chopmarked Coins.*

*As with many other facets of countermarks, Hammond, if we can generate interest in a particular area, and compile lists as you suggest, then we can publish it in CQ or in that all-encompassing catalog I've been dreaming about for the last hundred or so years. Unfortunately, I have only a very TINY list of persons willing to work at compiling, but I guess we'll have to get started soon, else I'll be at the expiring age.*

*I've designed a "standard" form on a 5 by 8 inch card, which I'll print in the next issue of CQ if I can't get it in this issue. It's not in a "final" state .. it's still subject to revision, so readers will have an opportunity to offer their comments.*

*My plans are to print about ten thousand cards initially and distribute them to the catalogers (sounds better than "compilers.") Later, as the need arises, more can be printed; I believe at least 100,000 will be needed, for there will be many duplications, and many, many cmks that few persons have seen.*

*I'm not sure how I can pay for that many cards, and for their postage two ways, but I'll worry about that later. The IMMEDIATE problem is catalogers.*

*Now, Mr. Chairman...*

Editor

\*\*\*\*\*

Your beginning is very good; best wishes for it to continue.

James J. Curto  
Grosse Pointe, Mich.



## The Scribe's Scribbles

Wherein most anything may be discussed by ye scribe .....

"Home is the sailor from the sea..."  
(And I retired from the Army!)

Anyhow, on 30 November a friend called and asked if I'd go with him as a crewmember to help deliver three new shrimp trawlers to Curacao; not being a clock puncher, my immediate reaction was, "Sure, where?"

The response was nearly as simple, "Three days from now."

The plan was to deliver the boats to Venezuelan crews at Curacao, but, fortunately, they didn't get there, and we received radio orders to deliver the boats to Cumana, Venezuela.

Considerably off the beaten path of ordinary travelers, Cumana is a small city of about 50,000 population, and is a number of years older than the city, St. Augustine, from which we departed. Being a historically orientated native Floridian, that fact nettled my pride a wee bit, but made me more of an acute observer.

The city boasts a fantastically beautiful harbor, and a modern, lively airport. One of the oldest Spanish forts in the "New World" sits atop a high hill about a mile from the Caribbean, commanding a thorough view of the surrounding terrain. The fort is in excellent condition and, is open for daily tours.

I was told by a guide that the fort never fell to an invading or attacking force; looking at its position, its outer defenses and the height and width of its walls, I can understand why it was never taken.

After two days and nights in that delightful city, we flew to Caracas (Maiquetia airport), where we stayed only a day and a night.

From Caracas we flew to Trinidad and changed to Cubana Airlines, which flies weary Russian IL-18 aircraft ... a poor, noisy imitation of the Lockheed Electra.

Two days and a night in Barbados were uneventful, other than spending a great amount, relatively, of money. I believe Barbados is more expensive to visit than are New York City or Paris, two of the most expensive cities in the world. Barbados is, though, a pleasant place to visit. Due to the English influence, visitors should be reminded that drivers still drive on the left side of the streets on that tiny little island ... and fast!

The trip to Barbados was due to the boat building company in St. Augustine asking us to the island to return two older boats for overhaul.

We stopped for two days at Ponce, Puerto Rico, then returned to St. Augustine.

Few coins were to be found in any of the cities mentioned, but I really didn't have enough time to conduct thorough searches at any place. I did note that coins in sight usually were found in jewelry shops and prices were "out of sight."

One of these days I've GOT to settle down and get a steady job ... something like 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with a two hour lunch break, at \$35 thou a year ... My, what a dreamer!

\*\*\*\*\*

The original concept of Coinquest didn't include the thought that it might be used as a platform to "get even" with any person or organization ... nor that it might develop into a "scandal sheet," however diminutive.

I have, though, been asked embarrassing questions verbally and by mail, about my expulsion from the ANA in 1973. For more than two years, I've held my tongue and pen, preferring to ride out the storm.

A simple, one-word reply to THE question is (was,) "Politics." (I was Grover Criswell's editor (of Bank Note Reporter) before and during the 1973 election campaign, when he was running for the ANA presidency against Virginia Culver.)

I like to think the new board of governors will invalidate an error of judgement made during the "heat" of a political campaign ... said error being a direct assault upon The First Amendment To The Constitution of the United States.

I do not apologize for my tactics during that bitterly fought campaign

... I was, after all, fighting FOR my candidate, and political campaigns aren't far removed from actual combat. And, after 22 years in the military service, I don't know how to fight or campaign at less than 100% of effort.

If, though, anyone was offended by the language I used, I apologize for any resulting embarrassment.

As the newly elected board of governors meets in February, I'll have a further statement in the March issue of CQ.

\*\*\*\*\*



My turn in the barrel department: Friend H. Alvin Sharp, over New Orleans way, hasn't had a chance to do anything about the CQ countermark, as I haven't written him for two months.

I have, though, conned my dear little mother out of several sterling silver heirlooms, which will become your "countermarked siege and necessity pieces," or whatever you'd like to call them.

Two serving trays, two bowls and two "loving cups;" are the sacrificial lambs; they'll be cut into ca. half dollar size pieces, marked with Felix the grasshopper, "CQ," and your subscription number.

Should confuse numismatists around the year 2100.

No realistic thoughts on a price as yet, but would like to hear from those of you who're interested. ONLY enough cmks to fulfill all subscription numbers, plus about ten "freebies," will be issued. If you don't order your number, it'll be put up for sale.

\*\*\*\*\*

Several subscribers and friends have protested price of catalogs (\$2 for subscribers, \$3 for non-subscribers, including a PRL.)

Well, in an attempt to get decent consignments, I've kept my auction fee at 10% for lots sold, plus shipping charges for any lots returned.

Cost of delivering the catalog and the PRL stateside was \$1.75 for the pair ... that includes photo developing / printing, catalog and PRL printing, and mailing.

I did all of the cataloging, photography, layout and mailing ... including licking the stamps. Now, if I were to add in a reasonable salary of fee for my efforts, the catalogs / PRLs would have cost about \$5 for the pair.

I'm of that "old school," though, who believe that a decent catalog will pay its own way ... that is, collectors will pay for it. Besides, I can't afford to print 1,000 copies to mail ... half of which, at least, would go to persons who have NO interest in bidding nor buying. They just want a catalog because it's FREE.

Now, when I get rich...

(Continued on Next Page)



# Scribbles . . .

The "Credit where credit's due," department: Typesetting for Coinquest is done by Ellen Rascoe, of Rascoe Photo/Type, Jacksonville, Fla. CQ copy is NOT easy for a typesetter, unless they work for Krause Publications, the Amos Press, or some other numismatic publisher.

Ellen Rascoe, though, is THE fastest and most accurate typesetter I've ever seen, or had the pleasure to work with. Not only that, she's young, pretty and has a very pleasant personality.

Jim and Jeanne Deputy, Deputy Printing, Palatka, Fla., do the labor of plate-making, printing, folding, etc., your copy of CQ.

If a plate isn't "right" the first time, they redo it until it IS right; while they're in business to make money, their personalized attention to detail / exactness precludes getting rick quickly, especially from CQ.

Jack Massey, also of Palatka, does film processing and printing; whatever Jack might lack in any technical area, he more than makes up for with his fast, fast response to my unusual (midnight!) demands.

Finally, if you see a crooked line of type, a misspelled word, a fuzzy photograph ... even if your stamp is upside down ... I'll have a word or two with the office boy, who prefers to remain unnamed. (He's only a temporary employee, anyhow.)

P. S. Don't forget to consider, and thank, all of the writers whose articles have appeared in CQ ... not a one of them has received a dime, nor more, for their efforts; their ONLY reward is sharing with you ... collectors and readers ... so, how about some "Thanks!" for all those fine people?

\*\*\*\*\*

Sign of the times? Several months ago I noticed a help wanted ad in one of the numismatic publications which read: "Wanted, Professional Numismatist. Must have at least two years experience." (A professional numismatist???)

And another: "Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ brings five years of numismatic expertise to our firm." (Course, maybe his expertise" is limited to Jefferson nickels.)

In either instance, I don't think I'd want to employ the applicant, nor Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, unless they happened to be another Walter Breen or equivalent.

\*\*\*\*\*

And there's the problem of Stanley Apfelbaum, president of First Coinvestors, Albertson, N.Y., who has cost me a goodly sum of money, along with a generous amount of embarrassment.

The problem between us comes under the general heading of "Breach of Contract," or, "Breach of Promise," or something similar; as a lawyer, I'm sure Stanley is aware of the correct terminology.

Maybe ... hopefully ... I can report in the March issue that we've settled our differences ... that it was a misunderstanding more on my part than on his.

"Forewarned is forearmed," 'tis said, and Stanley IS a CQ subscriber ... the very first, as a matter of fact.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Book Department: For those of you who're research minded, I'd like to recommend a one volume encyclopedia; The New Columbia Encyclopedia, which contains over 50,000

entries in more than 3,000 pages. (And, about ten pounds!)

Unfortunately, retail is \$79.50, but maybe Pat Hogan can get enough orders (two) for a discount through his book club.

\*\*\*\*\*

Ulrich Schreier, Mannheim, Germany, a friend, and a contributor to CQ, has written a goodly number of numismatic references in his native language.

If all goes well, sometime this year CQ might publish the first translation of one of his works ... appropriately about Gegenstempel (countermarks!)

Ulrich also has an excellent reputation in Germany and Europe as a naval historian and author. Strange bedfellows ... navy and numismatics.

\*\*\*\*\*

I find that the majority of collectors are woefully deficient in one strategic area ... numismatic literature.

Frequently we have auctions / mail bids in this country, where many fine publications are offered to the highest bidder.

Just received: A Numismatic Literature Mail Bid catalog from G. Frederick Kolbe, P. O. Box 2097, Mission Viejo, CA, 92675, which contains over 750 lots of desirable material.

I'm pleased to see Mr. Kolbe's Introduction, wherein he sets standards for book conditions; and, if you've ever wondered what size an "Octavo" volume is, he defines it for you, along with others.



It might or might not be significant that the date on this Saxony one-pfennig piece is 1776, but note the seven-petalled rosette countermark at one o'clock.

The coin is identified as Craig-91 by Bruce Smith, Iola, Wisc., who would like information on the cmk.

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# Coins of Darfur

By  
Patrick D. Hogan  
Iowa City, Iowa

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This short article is to bring attention to the readers of a little-known series of 20th century coins struck by the legal government of the Sultanate of Darfur. These coins are seemingly not mentioned in any standard catalog to date. Mention of them can be found in some articles on Sudanese coins, usually with erroneous assumptions.

Darfur Sultanate was established in the 16th century, with its capital at al-Fasher, in what is now western Sudan Republic. In the 18th century it came under dominance of the Egyptian Khedives, but during the rebellion of the Mahdi and his successor, the Khalifah, 1885-1898, Darfur was attached to the Mahdist State.

On the fall of the Khalifah, the state of Darfur became independent under the Sultan, 'Ali Dinar (1898-1916.) He rendered nominal fealty to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan government until the outbreak of World War I, when he allied himself with the Turkish Sultan and the Germans. He was attacked outside of al-Fasher, May 22, 1916, by an expeditionary force and defeated. He was killed by a patrol in November, and the 300 year-old sultanate came to an end.

It is usually said that his coins were struck from tin from "petrol cans" in 1915, to finance his army. However, A. J. Arkell, in an article published in the "Numismatic Chronicle", Ser. 5, Vol. 19, 1939, states that the coins were first struck in 1908, and ceased in 1914, and that they were made from billon with 10% silver and 90% copper. They were struck merely to provide coinage to solve the shortage of small change. Mr. Arkell inspected over 600 pieces, and did not find any tin coins.

The first coins allowed to circulate in Darfur by 'Ali Dinar were foreign counterfeits, made in Europe, in imitation of Egyptian coins, made out of copper-nickel-zinc, which we call "German Silver." These "Abu zaberlag" (false coins) bore the date 1223, Yr. 13, or 1213, Yr. 13; they do not have the usual milled edge. These became unpopular, though they helped solve the coinage shortage



(3/4 Actual Size)

within Darfur; they were not accepted outside of the sultanate.

Ali called then in and stamped them with " 'Ali/1312' ". However, continued counterfeiting took place.

Then in 1908 the Sultan decided to have his own dies engraved, and the Ghurush (piastres) were struck. They bear a tughra with the monogram of 'Ali Dinar on the obverse.

On the reverse: Struck in al-Fasher, with the date and "regnal date." The regnal dates are seemingly meaningless, as similar to the Mahdist series of coins.

Of the 600 coins, 332 were dated 1327 Yr. 71 (!) while 92 were 1327 Yr. 17 (1327 equals 1909.) Other dates range from 1323 to 1387, with various garbled dates in between. Five-ghurush dated 1328 and half-ghurush, also 1328, were struck in very limited numbers.

There's a continuing, crying need for articles and photographs for publication in CQ. Short filler-types, 30 to 100 words in length, such as this one, are needed desperately.

This is YOUR newsletter ... Get involved! Don't leave it all to the "old pros;" they need a rest.

## COINQUEST

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# FIRST CLASS MAIL

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## CQ Needs Articles

Absolutely ... positively ... the worst part of this portion of the hobby is getting WRITERS. Now, there ARE plenty of them (you!) out there, but I get mostly promises ... promises. "Yeah, I'll have a story in the mail next week," or, "Just as soon as I get back from my vacation, I'll send a few pages."

Of course, maybe he didn't get back ...

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks to all of you who were thoughtful enough to send Christmas cards.

I didn't send a single one .. the very day I sat down to begin addressing cards, my friend called regarding the trip to the Caribbean.

C'est la vie!

\*\*\*\*\*

Very disappointed that the Ephraim didn't bring more than \$100.00 in the mail bid sale, but that's the way the mop flops.

Of three 100.00 bids, chap in Oceanside, California was first.

My check has been mailed to the American Numismatic Society.

\*\*\*\*\*

Next auction planned for late March or early April. I'm accepting consignments now.

Will have a nice selection of world crowns, hopefully a rare pillar dollar, which I haven't yet seen.

Should be about 300 countermarks therein, also.



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